



## ADVISORY PANEL ON PUBLIC SECTOR INFORMATION

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**Date:** Tuesday 13 September 2011  
**Time:** 11:00am-4:05pm  
**Venue:** Steel House, Ministry of Justice

**Attendees: Chair** Professor David Rhind CBE  
**Members**

John Ponting, Expert Member  
Phillip Webb, Expert Member  
Hilary Newiss, Expert Member  
Michael Nicholson, Expert Member  
Shane O'Neill, Expert Member  
Prabhat Vaze, Expert Member  
Patricia Seex, Expert Member  
Dean White, Expert Member  
David Lammey, Representative Member, Northern Ireland  
Neil Ackroyd, Expert Member  
Michael Nicholson, Expert Member  
Bill Oates, Representative Member, Wales  
Hugh Neffendorf, Expert Member  
Robert Barr, Expert Member

**Non-  
members:**

Marcia Jackson Head of Standards, The National Archives  
Paul Edwards, APPSI Secretariat, The National Archives  
Patricia Humphries, Business Support, The National Archives  
Irene Loh, Cabinet Office (Item 6)  
Tord Johnsen Cabinet Office (Item 6)

### **1. Welcome, introductions and apologies**

- The Chair welcomed members to the 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting of APPSI.
- Apologies of absence were received from Michael Jennings, David Lammey, Hector MacQueen, Peter Wienand, Duncan Macniven, Bob Barr, Keith Dugmore and Paul Longley.
- The Chair reintroduced Dean White and Hugh Neffendorf to those who were not present at the last meeting.

### **2. Minutes and actions of the last meeting**

- The Panel approved the minutes of the last meeting on 27 July 2011 as a correct record. Outstanding actions from the previous meeting were discussed:

**Item 2.1 ACTION:** APPSI's statistical expert agreed to keep the Panel up to date on developments with Royal Mail and the Postal Address File. **Hugh Neffendorff, Neil Ackroyd, Bill Oates and David Rhind had a round robin discussion on the Royal Mail and PAF around how Postcom is to be incorporated into OFCOM.**

**Item 3.1 ACTION:** The National Archives to raise discussion on derived data monitoring processes and principles, as well as some real life examples of the process. **Ongoing: There was not enough time to discuss in detail at this meeting. This will be rescheduled for a future meeting.**

**Item 3.2 ACTION:** APPSI to discuss new sections and wider policies added to UKGLF, particularly that on derived data, at future meetings. **Ongoing, UKGLF is at a very early stage and at present there are not any significant issues for members to discuss at this stage.**

**Item 4.1 ACTION** Membership page content needs editing (previous members need putting into Alumni section) to reflect current membership. **The biographies are awaiting final approval from the National Archives Webmaster. Member's photos will be added once they have been all collated.**

**Item 4.2 ACTION** APPSI Secretariat to circulate website statistics (from TNA 'dashboard' published monthly) for APPSI site to members regularly. **The APPSI Secretary is continuing to pursue this with colleagues at The National Archives.**

**Item 4.3 ACTION:** The National Archives and the APPSI Secretariat will review the delineation between The National Archives pages and APPSI pages in left hand side grey navigation box, and to consider making APPSI pages of the site more defined with use of logo. **Ongoing: Ruth Ford Online Editor at the national archives has been holding internal discussions with website development team within the National Archives. Any changes need to complement the general structure of the National Archive website.**

**ITEM 6.2. ACTION:** APPSI Secretariat to send links out to all papers and documentation coming out across government over next few weeks. **Completed: The APPSI Secretariat circulated the Open Data and PDC consultation papers as well as UKGL Framework to members via email.**

**ITEM 6.2.3 ACTION:** APPSI members to consider two consultation papers (*Making Open Data Real: A public Consultation* and *A Consultation on Data Policy for a Public Data Corporation*) and to submit their views by top ten themes emerging from both papers by 31 August 2011. Members should feed into APPSI Secretariat to collate to pass to the Chair. (Views are to be kept high level and across the board). **Completed: Members provided in-depth and very constructive comments on both consultations. The APPSI Secretariat collated and provided summarised the views of member's into one document for, internal use only at this stage.**

**ITEM 6.2.3 ACTION:** The Chair will propose sub-groups on each major theme emerging from APPSI views of the consultations. The sub groups would then draft short papers ahead of the next meeting and send to the Secretary for wider dissemination. It is recognised that this is a tight timetable but these papers should be regarded as focusing our discussions on 13 September; since we hope to have both Cabinet Office and Shareholder Executive present we may change our views as a result of discussions before finalising our submissions. **It was acknowledged by members that there would be a very limited time frame to formulate groups to action comments. Members have therefore individually provided detailed responses and key themes have been identified.**

**ITEM 8.1 ACTION:** Hilary Newiss and Dean White to investigate data situation in the Health and Social Care Bill with APPSI Secretariat and to come back to APPSI with a note or proposal for a discussion if appropriate. **Completed: Hillary and Dean highlighted that there had not been much change to the Bill concerning Information (data) but agreed to keep members informed of any developments.**

**ITEM 8.3 ACTION:** The Chair asked Robert Barr to draw up some thoughts on Data typology and terminology. **Ongoing: Bob gave his apologies for the meeting, as he is currently overseas. APPSI Secretariat to follow up on his return.**

### **Update from The National Archives**

- Marcia Jackson, Head of Standards at The National Archives, passed Carol Tullo's apologies that she could not attend today's APPSI meeting due to unforeseen circumstances. Acknowledging that activity is traditionally quiet over the summer recess, Marcia provided APPSI members with a brief update on current PSI issues:
- Marcia explained that the Expert Participation Programme for legislation.gov.uk was progressing and that a focus was being made on Open Data as a Business She also highlighted that the Open Parliament Licence launched on 26 August 2011.
- Marcia Jackson stated that work is continuing in responding to APPSI's complaints report.

#### 3.1 Regulation

- Marcia Jackson explained that the National Archives and the Treasury continue to advise the Cabinet Office on the Protection of Freedoms Bill – right to data clause (clause 98) with regards to drafting and amendments. Marcia noted that the Report Stage and Third Reading in the House of Commons are set for 10 October 2011. The Minister Lord McNally will be taking these and other clauses amending FOIA through House of Lords stages.
- Derived Data: OS provided a quarterly summary of derived data exemption requests. Six requests were received during the last quarter, one of which related to Royal Mail intellectual property. Of the others, the exemptions were approved including those for Natural England, Cambridgeshire, Lewisham and Tower Hamlets.
- Public Task: The principles and criteria were circulated to the practitioner group and key stakeholders. The guidance has been revised and was re-issued in August.

#### 3.2 Legislation Services

- Legislation.gov.uk: New functionality continues to be released on legislation.gov.uk, such as blending in Explanatory Notes to legislation, draft legislation feeds, Welsh language search, and themed lists to support Government's new Red Tape Challenge that is totally reliant on our statistics and content.

#### 3.3 International PSI events

- Marcia Jackson went on to highlight key international meetings on PSI. She commented that the particular meetings on the horizon to note were:
  - European Commission on PSI Group meeting, Luxembourg on the 13 September 2011 – Jim Wretham and Matthew Pearce from the National archives will be attending for UK and presenting on public task.
  - Creative Commons Summit, in Warsaw running between 16th and 18th September 2011. Marcia stated that Jim Wretham and Beth Brook will be attending the session on *government information and licensing* on the 17 September. The Creative Commons Global Summit aims to bring together

the Creative Commons community to engage strategically on the future of shared commons; such as key adoption areas, data, public domain and the new version 4.0 licenses.

- The Open Government Partnership launch is due to take place in New York on the 20 September 2011, with Barack Obama in attendance. Francis Maude will be attending.
  - Marcia explained that the launch of Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a new multilateral initiative that aims to promote more open and accountable government, with the ultimate goals of empowering citizens, countering corruption, promoting economic efficiencies, harnessing innovation, and improving the delivery of services. The eight founding OGP governments will gather in New York to make an Open Government Declaration, announce their country action plans to promote open government principles, and will welcome the commitment of additional countries to join the Partnership.
  - Marcia said that while the OGP is initially to be presided over by U.S. State Department and their Brazilian counter parts, the UK will also be sharing the role in leading and driving the OGP forward.
- The UN Internet Governance Forum 6, PSI workshop *PSI online: towards a global policy framework*, is due to take place in Nairobi on 30 September 2011. Jim Wretham – National Archives will be attending via teleconference.
- The 6th Ministerial eGovernment Conference will take place on the 17 – 18 November 2011. Marcia highlighted that a session on 'Borderless eGovernment Services for Europeans', will include a session on benefits and risks of PSI re-use.
- The Open Government Data Camp is due to take place in Warsaw between 20 and 21 October 2011.
- LAPSI (Legal Aspects of PSI) seminar is due to take Warsaw on 20 and 21 October 2011. John Williams from the National archives will be attending.
- The National Archives to host an International PSI summit in London on 26 October 2011, Licensing and PSI policy colleagues from Australia, New Zealand and the US have been invited among others. A summary of the meeting will be fed back to APPSI.

#### Discussion:

- A number of members highlighted the how the PSI agenda has emerged on to the international stage. This led to wide discussion regarding the PSI agenda in the UK and how strategies can be compared against others emerging internationally.
- A number of comments were made by members as to the reasons behind the sudden increase in international engagement of PSI. Philip Webb highlighted that there has been a social change across Europe with citizens becoming ever more wary of those who govern alongside requiring a greater demand for transparency, as well as a desire to know how government is spending their money. Michael Nicholson commented that at a practical level, PSI has become a necessity to be able to govern. Technological advances in the ability to share information has meant that governments are in many senses seeking assurances from each other in understanding best practise of how to release data effectively.
- Following on from the discussion on the rise of PSI internationally, Neil Ackroyd raised the question to members of how can we compare where we are on PSI release compared to other countries?

- Michael Nicholson raised the point that trying to compare a country's performance on PSI is quite difficult to do, especially in a European context. It is difficult to envisage countries being able to agree a framework or share the same values on what good PSI / data management is.
- Chair, David Rhind asked Marcia Jackson whether it would be possible, given The National Archives will be attending some of these meetings, whether they could produce a paper that identified the key issues, trends and gaps to enable APPSI to obtain a general feel for the state of PSI from an international perspective. Phillip Webb offered his help to do this.
- Members highlighted as an example of the widening PSI agenda, the Andrew Coote Study which is now expanding beyond OS and being sponsored by the Cabinet Office. APPSI members questioned whether there were any ongoing developments regarding this?
- Members asked Marcia about the consultation on scientific data. They highlighted that Postcom is being absorbed into Ofcom.

**ACTION:** Jim Wretham will circulate a note to APPSI members highlighting the key themes to arise from the PSI working group in Luxembourg on 13 September 2011.

**ACTION:** Marcia Jackson, National Archives, to raise David Rhind's request for a paper on international perspectives with National Archive colleagues.

**ACTION:** Marcia Jackson, National Archives, to investigate what is happening with the Andrew Coote study.

#### **4.1 APPSI Business**

- The APPSI Secretariat highlighted to members that their biographies for the website were waiting to be approved from the Webmaster at The National Archives. The Secretariat went on to discuss items and venue suggestions for future meetings. The Secretariat invited members to contact him directly outside of the meeting to share any ideas.
- David Rhind stated that APPSI's next meeting in December is traditionally an opportunity to hear presentations or have speakers attend on issues of general interest for APPSI going forwards
  - Bill Oates raised the topic of Government acting as a platform for PSI rather than an enactor as a possible future discussion topic
  - Hugh Neffendorf highlighted his interest in the Future of the Census beyond 2011.
  - Members suggested seeing whether Christopher Graham the Information Commissioner would be able to speak to APPSI members at a future meeting?
- The Secretariat explained to members that he was still awaiting colleagues at the National Archives to provide a response to members request for APPSI website statistics.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to ensure TNA provides update on RSS feed and website statistics.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to email members to request biography photos from those who have not been able to attend recent meetings.

#### **Item 5: APPSI's "Top Twenty" key issues arising from Open Data & PDC consultation papers and relating themes**

- APPSI members were of the view that the themes highlighted in the Secretariat's summary of member's comments made a good start to identify common areas to focus response. The main ones being around 1. Governance 2. Cost and Pricing, 3. Regulation, 4. Licensing, 5. Growth, 6. Access to

data, 7. Value of data, 8. The Purpose of the PDC, 9. The Scope for Innovation 10. Strategic Vision for PDC.

- Bill Oates stated that when providing APPSI's formal response it will be important to draw out separate responses on the Open Data and PDC paper.

## **5.1 Growth Review**

- APPSI members expressed concerns that there is no obvious way of contributing to the Growth Review open data strand and would wish to engage with this review. Five industry groups have been set up to focus on how money to be made from public data. The review needs a number of expert economists to set up a rigorous analytical framework for this area, 'taking account issues such as displacement.
- Members discussed Postal Address File, noting that the baseline costs for PAF are quite modest. The ability for growth will be hindered by the value chain costs such as software costs for businesses. The scope of the market needs to be explored.

## **ITEM 6: Cabinet Office workshop on Open Data and PDC consultations**

- The Chair of APPSI welcomed Irene Loh and Tord Johnsen from the Cabinet Office to the meeting. The Chair made clear that while APPSI were there to offer a constructive critique of the consultations, in the hope to achieve a strengthened Open Data Policy.

### 6.1 Open Data Paper consultation Making Open Data Real – Irene Loh Cabinet Office

- Irene Loh thanked members for the opportunity to consult with APPSI recognising the unique construct of the panel with both private sector and public sector members. She started the discussion by encouraging APPSI and members individually to respond to the consultation papers. Irene stated that they are trying to ensure that they get as broad a picture of views as possible on the consultation process.
- Irene Loh stated that the policy is intended to kick start the debate on the concept of Open Data as being an operating principle of Public Services. The government's proposed approach is creating a pull (a right to data) and a push (a presumption of publication). Irene Loh highlighted that a key aim of the Open Data policy is to also achieve transparency through government through the principle of citizens being able to hold government to account through greater knowledge and access of data.
- Irene Loh went on to state that the main areas which she wanted to discuss and gain APPSI's perspective were on; 1. What are the Barriers to Open Data, 2, Are there already examples of good practise in data sharing in existence? 3. What are the quick wins to help the UK towards being the world leader on Open Data?

## **6.2 Discussion**

- In response to Irene Loh's introduction members discussed some of the areas which may have been missed in the consultation paper.

### 6.2.1 Definition of Open Data Policy

- Philip Webb challenged the Cabinet Office to think more carefully about defining the success of the Open Data policy as being world class. What are the criteria to being world class? How is this to be measured and agreed against by other countries?
- Dean White noted that Open Data policy sets out to achieve many different aims, but explained the desire for the policy to be fully transparent with data it shares may well have to be at the expense of achieving growth.
- In responding to members' questions about how government will identify itself as a 'world leader' Irene Loh stated that launch of the Open Government Partnership on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2011 would be a catalyst amongst member countries to identify a set of best practice and principles. She believed that

eventually a bench marking system would form in which it would be possible to assess a nation's own standard against.

### 6.2.2 Growth

- Members asked Irene Loh whether consideration had been given to understanding and prioritising the data. Members explained that there are many types of data that would be very costly to collate, digest, and process for customers use; only for the data not to be seen by the public as being of any value to them. Government will need to ensure that its own view of valuable data is the same as the customers.
- Conversely members widely agreed that government must also not tie itself to providing data which the public might want, but in the long term proves unsustainable to manage and monitor.

### 6.2.3 Valuing Data

- Government should focus on achieving clear data format, quality and metadata standards across government and assess cost-benefit analysis of managing its information as well as possible. An increasing challenge comes from private sector information contributing to and being co-mingled with public sector information; there needs to be clear policy for managing that.
- Irene Loh responded that at this moment in time the consultation was working on the premise that all data was of equal value. Irene acknowledged valuing data will be an important concept to take on board.
- Members argued that detailed analysis of data sets may be helpful, as it will highlight where the opportunities are greatest. Members highlighted the "Value of Geospatial Information" report, sponsored by the Local Government Association. This used an economic modelling approach to produce a "Top 10" list of applications using geographic information that had the greatest potential within local government.

### 6.2.4 Public Sector engagement

- David Lammey explained that it is natural for other government departments to feel cautious in questioning or challenging another department's policy.
- Irene Loh agreed that efforts should be made to dispel caution within other government departments to respond and suggested that the Cabinet Office could write an open letter to all departments encouraging an open response to the consultation. Irene Loh reiterated the desire of the consultation to attract as broad a range of responses as possible, including all government departments.
- Bill Oates raised a wider point in the discussion, that there is a need to ensure that there is open dialogue to ensure that the public sector as a whole and government departments are on the same journey; in terms of having an agreed view of what making data open is setting out to achieve.
- Bill Oates stated that the policy in its current format makes it difficult for the policy to be replicated within devolved administrations. There is at present no clear guidance or framework which can be used as an example.
- Members asked Ms Loh whether the Open Data policy had given consideration to local government data, and if the Cabinet Office would speak directly to local government as a part of the consultation process. Local government has a vast amount of valuable data at its disposal and it will be important to ensure that they understand the impact the Open Data policy and PDC could have.
- Irene Loh stated that at present, the view would be to allow the policy to be managed through local governance frameworks such as the CLG. Members questioned whether this was likely to be an effective channel.

## 6.3 Public Data Corporation

- Tord Johnsen explained that they viewed the role of the PDC to unify the Open Data policy across all government departments and to support the growth agenda and innovation in the wider economy. The hope is the PDC will be to provide greater efficiencies within the public sector through more collaboration and sharing of data.

- Tord went on to explain that government would hope the PDC could become a centre for excellence for collating and sharing data and a model that could be replicated as public data model within other countries.
- The Chair explained to Tord that APPSI members had found the PDC consultation paper difficult to understand because the PDC as a concept is unclear in terms of identifying the problem it has been created to resolve. The PDC in its current format appears to create complexity by trying to bring together organisations which address very different markets and have different users.
- Members discussed with Tord the need for a PDC. Many members were of the view that the need for a PDC is minimal, and found the defence of Trading Funds in the PDC very surprising given the money it generates is relatively small. (Trading funds are not free at the point of use.)
- Members commented that prior to deciding what the future model of a PDC should be; the existing data models need to be understood. The income of organisations such as the Met Office and Ordnance Survey depend on data delivery, whilst the Land Registry depends upon a data creation model. It needs to be recognised that the vast majority of income is from the public sector and it has become ever more concentrated into a small number of un-competed licence agreements that last over considerable time periods.

### 6.3.1 Governance and regulation

- Members discussed with Tord the need for strong governance of Open Data rather than a government corporation to manage it. Some members argued that Government traditionally is much better at providing regulatory functions than delivering commercial services themselves. Conversely it was recognised by members that the more commercial the PDC aims to be, the more investment and expense will need to be expended on regulation.
- Members' argued that Government should move away from trying to produce the final product with its data and allow the private sector to add value to the raw data it has at its disposal.
- In response to the discussion, Tord explained to members that at this early stage in the consultation process it is difficult to describe what the PDC will look like, but its purpose will in part be to driving the policy of open and sharing data ensuring that there are no barriers to access. Tord said the intention would be initially to pilot the PDC with a small number of organisations.
- Members explained to Tord that an alternative model to amalgamation of the existing trading funds into a single corporation may be to definitively split the role of Regulation (Customer) and Delivery (Supplier). Exploit government's skill in Regulation as an Intelligent Customer and encourage the trading funds to develop in a commercial market place to enable cost effective delivery while stimulating an innovative commercial environment for the UK.
- Members discussed the Protection of Freedoms Bill (clause 98) the re-use of PSI being brought come under the regulatory regime of the Information Commissioner. Members noted that Clause 98 will raise issues around access rights and the re-use regimes. Members asked the question whether the role of the Information Commissioner will clash with that of the role of OPSI?

### 6.3.2 Pricing and Charging

- APPSI members' agreed that there are some categories of government data which should be free at the point of use because of the merits of a single definitive database being used by all parties. Addressing is an obvious example.
- Members observed that there is quite a lot of evidence that exists to suggest that at least parts of the private sector do not object to paying for certain data. Members believe that a main challenge to overcome is the relationship many public facing parts of the government departments have with the private sector and their ability to understand the value of the data at their disposal. It is important that the public sector has an understanding of the characteristics of data and can manage it with clear and easy licences.
- Members highlighted to Tord Johnsen that Trade associations have always emphasised 'Fair not Free' Open Data is not the same as Free Data. Whilst members recognise government's desire to make data free, there are underlying complexities of making data ready for public consumption. There may be a

requirement to charge for certain data sets and utilise the income generated to allow 'priority' data sets to be made free to the public.

### 6.3.3 Public Task

- Members discussed the importance of public task. They highlighted the centralisation and privatisation of Defence Research as an example of where a clear Public Task definition would have added real value. Whilst based on good intentions there were substantial losses in scientific research capability in the public sector. A strong Public Task in a similar situation would help departments recognise the need to retain certain public sector data as primary assets.
- The Post Office and PAF were also highlighted by members as examples where a conflict of deregulation, loss of monopoly, and commercialisation, need to be balanced between its Public Task and commercial viability in a deregulated competitive environment.
- Members agreed that if the PDC does proceed in its current format, there will need to be an agreed Public Task that defines the fundamental public task for public sector information rich and trading enterprises, as well as setting out the key PSI needs to be delivered.

## **7. Formulating APPSI's response to the Open Data and PDC Consultations**

- The chair noted to members that responses have been invited by the Cabinet Office to be made by 27 October 2011.
- Members agreed that APPSI should provide two separate responses to the consultations with a covering letter by the Chair.
- The Chair requested that APPSI members provide summary views to the Secretariat regarding the key issues to formulate APPSI's main response on the PDC paper. The Secretariat will assist the Chair in drawing together APPSI's response on the consultation papers. APPSI's response to the Open Data consultation will be drawn from the detailed comments members made in response to the paper and the summary paper produced by the Secretariat.
- The response needs to be set against the main policy questions in the consultation. APPSI will provide constructive recommendations which will be published on the APPSI website, alongside a submission to the minister.

**ACTION:** APPSI Members to provide Secretariat with summary views on the Key Issues on the PDC consultation paper by Monday 19 September 2011.

**ACTION:** The Chair with the assistance of Secretariat will draft APPSI response to the consultation papers

**ACTION:** The Secretariat to draft submission to the minister summarising APPSI's response.

**ACTION:** Secretariat to publish APPSI's response on the website.

## **8. APPSI updates**

### 8.1 Items for next agenda

- Beyond 2011 census project
- Discussion on Privacy Paper
- Government as a Platform
- Derived Data
- Invite Information Commissioner or appropriate colleague

**ACTION:** Secretariat to liaise with members to identify potential speakers for future meetings.

### 8.2 News from the Minister

- There were no updates to provide from the minister.

**ACTION:** APPSI Chair to continue to brief Minister on any major issues arising from APPSI meetings.

### 8.3 PSI in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

- Duncan Macniven representative for Scotland was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting. David Lammy representative for Northern Ireland and Bill Oates provided updates to members as per annex A.

**ACTION:** Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland representatives to circulate any relevant updates on PSI issues in their administrations to Panel members.

## **9. Any other business**

- The Chair notified members that it was John Ponting and Hector McQueen's last meeting at APPSI. In the absence of Hector the Chair relayed to members Hector's best wishes to the panel for the future. The Chair acknowledged the extremely valuable contribution Hector made to the panel during his time on the APPSI panel.
- The Chair highlighted that John Ponting had been with APPSI since its inception and thanked him personally for his expertise and the advice he has provided over his time with APPSI. Members echoed this and agreed both John and Hector would be very much missed.

### 9.1 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 8 December 2011. The venue is to be confirmed.

## **APPSI MEETING – 13 SEPTEMBER 2011**

### **Devolved Administration Updates**

#### **WALES UPDATE**

1. Welsh Government has commissioned COI to design a Welsh version of data.gov.uk, through which PSI that is relevant to Wales could be made available. This work has stalled somewhat with the changes to the management of data.gov.uk, but through two user workshops, it identified a number of "personas" who summarised key PSI stakeholders, including both publishers and users.

2. The wider PSI and data policy issues remain under discussion at official level in Wales, with the potential for a Welsh Ministerial paper in the autumn

#### **BILL OATES**

#### **NORTHERN IRELAND UPDATE**

##### **Legislative Consent Motion – FOI provisions in the Protection of Freedom Bill**

On 7 July at its last meeting before the summer break, the Executive agreed to my recommendation that the First Minister and deputy First Minister bring forward a Legislative Consent Motion to the Assembly, which would permit the extension of the FOI provisions in the Protection of Freedoms Bill to Northern Ireland.

I'm currently preparing a Legislative Consent Memorandum (a written brief for all the MLAs). This will inform a debate on the LCM which may well be scheduled before the end of September – 26 September has been mooted. Early debate will facilitate the Assembly's keeping pace with the progress of the Protection of Freedoms Bill through Westminster.

I'm also preparing opening and closing speeches for the Minister bringing forward the LCM, together with background briefing and answers to supplementary questions.

##### **Public Consultations on 'Data Policy for a Public Data Corporation', and 'Making Open Data Real'**

Francis Maude, Minister for the Cabinet Office, and Edward Davey, Minister for Employment Relations, Consumer and Postal Affairs, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, wrote to the First Minister and Deputy First Minister on 4 August about the launch of a consultation on Data Policy for a Public Data Corporation (PDC). They are keen to ensure that in considering issues of data policy and the creation of a PDC, any implications for devolved administrations are taken into account.

I've prepared advice and a draft reply to the Ministers which awaits clearance.

In broad terms, Ministers here have been advised (over the past number of months) of the benefits of maintaining consistency with the rest of the UK as regards access to information/data policy. Sharing the same legislative platform should help us all avoid differences of approach and any intra-UK conflicts of policy approach/opinion. Also, if Northern Ireland doesn't follow the 'mainstream' approach, then our officials will suffer, as any updates to Codes of Practice and official guidance will necessarily cater for

that mainstream. The point has also been made that citizen's here would have inferior information rights compared to their counterparts in other parts of the UK.

I have also outlined to Ministers the view of the UK government that the release and re-use of public sector information under the new Open Government Licence should help stimulate economy and society - helping individuals and business to help themselves. And, I've referred to various initiatives such as the data.gov.uk website. Ministers here are aware that we have a relatively small private sector in Northern Ireland and that it needs stimulus, especially in the present, difficult, financial and economic climate.

On the other hand, Ministers here have been looking at new ways to raise revenue, so I have assured them that existing revenue streams will not have to be "turned off", and that new ones - provided there is a strong business case - can be justified.

### **Liaison with Cabinet Office - Transparency team**

I have been communicating with Cass Chideock and others in the Cabinet Office Transparency team over Transparency and Open Data issues in general and the Protection of Freedoms Bill in particular. A meeting in person or a video-conference has been mooted and is likely to take place soon.

### **Licensing Information Workshop – Belfast – 17 August 2011**

Presentations were delivered by Jim Wretham, Head of Information Policy, The National Archives (TNA):

- (i) 'UK Government Licensing Framework.'
- (ii) 'Transparency and Open Data.'
- (iii) 'European Perspective on Public Sector Information – What next?'
- (iv) 'Access and Re-use.'

Marcia Jackson, Head of Standards, TNA: 'Regulatory Framework and maintaining standards.'

Clare Hadley, INSPIRE Delivery & UK Location Programme Alignment Manager, Ordnance Survey (GB.): 'Inspired sharing?'

The workshop was hosted by Land & Property Services, Department of Finance and Personnel, and was attended by representatives from most Departments. There was some follow-up correspondence after the workshop about Northern Ireland examples of good practice in publishing datasets, and about the possibility of delegated authority for licensing of all Crown copyright data being given to one 'lead' NI Department, rather than each Department or Agency seeking delegated authority in their own right.

**DAVID LAMMEY**